

~~SECRET~~

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : GENERAL TAYLOR

Lt Col O'Neill

DATE: 28 March 1959

FROM : SGS *LM*

SUBJECT: Soviet Maneuvers

1. Attached DCSOPS S/S is responsive to your request that consideration be given to the possible exploitation of inconsistencies between Khrushchev's statements of peaceful coexistence and the extensive Soviet maneuvers which were concluded in East Germany on 24 March 59.

2. DCSOPS, with ACSI concurring, recommends that DA not release the information on Soviet maneuvers but that the matter be discussed informally at the next meeting of the DOD Coordinating Group (Cold War).

APPROVED *MDV*SEE ME

DECLASSIFIED
 AUTHORITY: NND 901053
 BY: HK-M/SK DATE: 11/18/91

~~SECRET~~

1614

901053-179

~~SECRET~~

1

1

ODCSOPS,
SPWAR Division 73105

Major F. B. Kane, Jr.

OPS PL SP

Soviet Maneuvers (U)

23 MAR 1959

X

DISCUSSION

1. (S) This action is designed to consider whether or not to exploit inconsistencies between the statements and actions of the Soviet Government during the period of the Berlin crisis.
2. (S) The Soviet Union is presently conducting the most extensive maneuvers for this time of year ever carried out in East Germany (see Tab B). This maneuver will be concluded 24 March 1959. At the same time Premier Khrushchev is proclaiming to the Free World that the Western Powers are making threats against the Soviet Union whose desire is peaceful coexistence between states of different social systems (see Tab C).
3. (S) The above inconsistencies could be emphasized to the peoples of the Free World. Army Intelligence has available information on the extent of Soviet maneuvers in East Germany. This information could be released to the Free World Press by an official announcement by the Department of Defense or the Department of the Army, military officials in Europe or by an unofficial release to the Press in the United States (see Tab A). If the information is released without coordinating with the Department of State, its release may not be in support of current foreign policy.
4. (S) The release of this information at the present time might precipitate Soviet reaction designed to curtail further the intelligence collection effort. Such curtailment would be highly undesirable at this particular time.
5. (S) The conduct of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) combined joint atomic strike and air defense exercises 13-17 April 1959 (see Tab D) may open the United States to similar charges of increasing tensions.

RECOMMENDATION

(U) That the Department of the Army not release this information on Soviet maneuvers but that the matter be discussed informally at the next meeting of the DOD Coordinating Group (Cold War).

COORDINATION

ACSI - concur - J.J. Davis, BG, ext 73398

APPROVED — C/S US ARMY

MAR 30 1959 *RJ*

4 Incl

1. Tab A, Unofficial Press Release
2. Tab B, Soviet Maneuvers
3. Tab C, Extracts
4. Tab D, NATO Exercise

J. E. MOORE
Lieutenant General, GS
Deputy Chief of Staff
for Military Operations

Revised COMSEC
March 1962

~~SECRET~~

180

2903390

file

CS 091 Germany (25 Mar 59)

Tab A

Unofficial Press Release

According to East German refugees, the Soviets are currently carrying out large scale army maneuvers in East Germany. Massive tank forces are involved in the most extensive troop exercises ever seen this early in the year. Further, East German Army units are carrying out alarming out-of-season field exercises in the same area. Soviet forces in East Germany consist of 20 armored type divisions. The East German Army has an additional six combat-ready divisions.

The purpose of the release is to point out the inconsistencies of Soviet statements and actions. Large scale movements into the field can only be interpreted as moves of attempted intimidation and war of nerves activity. It certainly is not consistent with Khrushchev's recent statements at the news conference, 19 March 1959, calling for peaceful deliberations and calm negotiations.

Regrade UNCLASSIFIED upon
approval of Summary Sheet.

~~SECRET~~

901053 - ~~181~~

181

SECRET

Tab B

Soviets Conduct Army Level Field Exercise in East Germany (C)

USAREUR reports that the Group of Soviet Forces, Germany (GSFG), is conducting an Army level field training exercise, possibly involving elements of five line divisions from three ground Armies. The activity is being conducted in an area approximately 20 miles southeast of Berlin, which has been restricted to travel by Allied military missions for the period 15-24 March. Concurrently with the Soviet activity, there are reports that elements of three divisions of the East German Army either are participating in this exercise or are conducting separate training activity in the same general area.

Although the scope of the Soviet activity cannot as yet be definitely determined, preliminary analysis suggests that elements of the First Guards Tank Army compose the major force in the exercise and elements of one motorized rifle division of the unidentified (Ex-Third Guards Mechanized) Army is participating in the role of opposing force. Observation of movement into the area of activity also indicates that elements of one line division of the Eighth Guards Army is involved as a command post exercise type participant.

COMMENT: The staging of exercise activity of the scope indicated at this period of the training year is a departure from the normal training pattern and may indicate Soviet efforts to ascertain the current operational capabilities of GSFG units. If subsequent reports confirm participation by the East German Army units, it would probably reflect efforts to bring East German Army units to the highest possible state of combat readiness in connection with the current Berlin tension.

~~SECRET~~

901053 - ~~182~~

182

Tab C

Extracts of Premier Khrushchev's News Conference 19 March 1959

"The international climate can and must be cleared. The only thing we are seeking is to have the storm clouds of a new war disappear from the international horizon forever . . .

"We are pleased to note that our peace policy is being increasingly appreciated by the peoples of all nations.

"We value this very much and we shall do all in our power to put an end to the after-effects of World War II, bring about the conclusion of a peace treaty with Germany and contribute in this way toward clearing international relations of all kinds of unwanted factors which are obstructing normal relations and a peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems. . .

"One cannot at the same time fail to notice the statements by some Western political and military leaders which distort the true nature of Soviet proposals concerning a peace treaty with Germany and Berlin, imputing aims which we do not have. The impression arises that these people still cannot abandon the methods of the Cold War. . . .

"We would like the Western Governments to discard the senseless threats made against us by their generals and admirals and to sit down at a conference table with us. . .

"We shall do everything in our power to make the talks a success."

901053

183

Tab D

NATO Exercise

During the period 13-17 April 1959 NATO forces will be involved in the annual atomic exercise at about the same scope as carried out each year. This exercise is designed to test the combined joint-atomic strike plan and air defense plan and will utilize forces available at the time the exercise begins. These forces will include ground and air atomic strike forces in addition to air defense forces. Other forces will conduct a command post exercise down to echelons designated by regional commanders.

Regraded ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

March 1962

(Date or event)

~~SECRET~~

901053 -

184